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THEOLOGICAL INSTRUCTION IN SWITZERLAND.

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IV.

LAUSANNE.

Here, as in Geneva, are two schools of theology side by side, but the contrast is not so marked. In fact, so slight is the present dogmatic divergence that one of the professors of the university expressed himself very frankly about the needlessness of having two complete sets of professors, because the schools differ about the relation of church and state. Here, as elsewhere, however, history has shown that it is much easier to make a breach than to heal it, and certain obvious advantages come from the very rivalry.

The university has existed as such only since 1890, when the medical department was added; but as an academy it has been organized since 1838, and the theological faculty dates back to 1538. The lectures are still held in a building as old as that at Bern and lying in the centre of the old town; but a Russian graduate has recently left by will three million francs for a new building, so that in a few years the university will be admirably housed.

I refer to only two of the professors, Professor H. Vuilleumier and Professor Paschoud. The former has the chair of Old Testament introduction and exegesis. He is a man thoroughly familiar with German scholarship, speaking the language with as much apparent fluency as he does French, and yet looking at the different developments of German thought from the independent standpoint of one who feels that he belongs to a different race and has no interest in the victory of this or that party or tendency.

Professor Paschoud is a man of different mould, somewhat less cosmopolitan and speaking German only with difficulty. He has been in the active pastorate for years, and was called but two years ago to the chair of practical theology. At this time his opening address was an exceedingly interesting discussion of the burning ecclesiastical question in French Switzerland, a defence of the position of the state church as contrasted with that of the free church.

From the independent faculty two names are perhaps deserving of special prominence: Professor Gautier, brother of the astronomer Professor Raoul Gautier of Geneva; and Professor Astié, recently brought into special prominence by the action of the synod of the free church. This has expressed its disapproval of his *imprudences*, while curiously enough not venturing to characterize his statements as untrue. Of course this action is made the most of by the advocates of liberalism, as showing that heresy cannot even be kept out of the free church despite its strict tests and orthodox traditions. The fact is, however, that Professor Astié's utterances regarding inspiration and kindred themes would scarcely have attracted attention outside the free church, and perhaps not even there, had it not been for a certain brusqueness in the manner of their expression. He is one of the older professors, and, in the language of one of the professors of the state church, "they ought to have let him alone."

NEUCHÂTEL.

The journey from Lausanne to Neuchâtel, where the state "Academie" still lacks the needed medical faculty to make it a university, and where the free theological school is not yet quite twenty years old, takes us again away from the higher Alps and to the slopes of the Jura range. This time, however, the Jura mountains are to the westward and not between us and the Alps, as at Basel, so that on clear days the Alpine panorama from Neuchâtel is more extended than from any other Swiss city, reaching all the way from Pilatus by Lucerne to Mt. Blanc.

The city itself is most beautifully located, stretching along the lake with its fine new quays and reaching far up the hill-

side. The chateau, which commands the town, is wonderfully picturesque, with its old bastions and beautiful church, and parts of the town are very quaint; but the new streets by the lake are broad and beautiful, and even the older portion of the city has not been turned into a labyrinth by its ridges and ravines as has Lausanne.

The academy lies at the north end of the city, in an admirable situation beside the lake, and is an excellent modern building. The rules concerning attendance upon lectures, etc., are quite different from these of the universities, students of theology, for instance, being required to attend all the courses of their year much as we are in our own seminaries. Here, as elsewhere, however, persons are allowed to attend the lectures as *auditeurs* without matriculating as students.

The lectures of the *Faculté Indépendente* are held in quarters in themselves unpretentious, but situated only a few rods from the chateau with its mediæval battlements and commanding its wonderful views. The number of students is very small but, as an offset, the relations between students and professors are correspondingly intimate and cordial.

In Neuchâtel there is a single form which overshadows all others and is looked upon with an affectionate reverence scarcely to be paralleled among the living leaders of the free church in Switzerland. I refer to the venerable Professor Frédéric L. Godet, so well known in America through his commentaries, especially that upon the Gospel of Luke. Born in Neuchâtel October 25, 1812, he was instructor of the late Emperor Frederick of Germany from 1838 to 1844. In 1850 he became professor of theology in the academy at Neuchâtel, and held this position until 1873. At that time he left the state church, was one of the leaders in organizing the free church of the canton of Neuchâtel, and became professor of theology in the free theological faculty. In 1887 he resigned his professorship, but he still, at the age of eighty, delivers one lecture a week as a favor to those who love to sit at his feet. Last summer his subject was a running exegesis of the Acts.

While Dr. Godet has so largely retired from active work, his

presence is still a benediction not only to the church and school which he helped to found, but also to all who come under his influence. I shall not soon forget my own first meeting with him. It seemed to me that I had never seen one in whose face and words and whole manner such ripeness and tenderness of Christian faith and experience were mingled with an almost childlike eagerness and enthusiasm of interest in whatever concerned the kingdom of God. "The revered head of orthodoxy,"—as he was called by one whose own views are decidedly liberal,—it was yet beautiful to note the Christian charity of his disposition, and to see how he regarded even the prevalent exclusive emphasis of the humanity of Jesus only as the excessive development of a movement necessary in order to bring the distant Christ of theology again into vital contact with the life of the world.

Such was the impression of a first interview, and it was only intensified by subsequent meetings and by listening to the beautiful simplicity of his preaching in the little hotel chapel of a hamlet high up in the Bernese Oberland.

Fortunately for the free school, the chair vacated by Dr. Godet is ably filled by his son, Professor Georges Godet, a most delightful man and efficient teacher, and one to whom I am under personal obligation for much of my information about the origin of the free church in Neuchâtel.

Another name held in high esteem is that of Professor Monvert, who teaches church history and Old Testament introduction.

This completes the list of the protestant schools of theology in French Switzerland.

On the whole, we find a state of things, both in theology and in methods of instruction, much more closely allied to our own than is the case in German Switzerland. This is especially true of the independent schools; and I imagine that a student could go from one of the more liberal of our theological seminaries to the independent schools of Geneva, Lausanne, or Neuchâtel without experiencing any serious shock except in the change of languages. So far removed are these schools from the prevail-

ing liberalism of German thought that one of their professors told me with evident sorrow that when their students went for a semester or two to a German university they were apt to come back very much shaken in their faith.

Apart from its greater average orthodoxy and the greater similarity of its methods to our own—two things which will be regarded as advantages or disadvantages according to what one seeks—there is one respect in which French Switzerland has for many Americans a decided advantage over German Switzerland. I mean as a place in which to acquire a foreign language. It is so universally the case that the younger men coming to Europe for study wish also to perfect themselves in one of the continental languages, that the opportunities for doing this ought to be taken into account. In giving the preference to French Switzerland in this respect, I do not mean that French is more valuable for the theologian than German—for the reverse is doubtless the case—but simply that in French Switzerland the people speak French and in German Switzerland they do not speak German. In the cities of French Switzerland, and in none of them more than in Neuchâtel, a pure and beautiful French has almost entirely taken the place of the *patois*. In German Switzerland, on the other hand, even among the cultured, a dialect is spoken which is allied to the *Mittel-hoch-deutsch*, and is so different from pure German as almost to constitute a distinct language. Of course one hears good German in the universities, where, indeed, many of the professors are Germans and not Swiss, and also in the churches; but it is not spoken on the streets, and even the students talk to one another in a language almost absolutely unintelligible, even to a good German scholar. All people of culture in German Switzerland can speak pure German, but they ordinarily do not, and that fact should be borne in mind by such as have still imperfect mastery of the language.

It would be easy to enter into detail concerning the examinations to which students are subjected, and the various steps by which the Swiss student of theology becomes a pastor. I have refrained from doing so, partly because the process is in general so similar to that in Germany, but chiefly because I have wished

to make these papers primarily of practical assistance to the American student who wishes to know what kind of instruction is to be found in the different Swiss schools of theology. I shall be more than content if the facts here given prove at all as helpful to the reader as has been the necessary investigation to myself, especially if they shall lead any to share the intellectual and spiritual, as well as the physical stimulus of this unique land.